

aches, scars, and a pretty boy by your bed

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aches, scars, and a pretty boy by your bed

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Summary

The nurses' apparent ability to read minds comes in clutch once again as she smiles. With a small tip of her head she directs his gaze to Dream's left.

"This one hasn't left your side for one second since you were admitted."

Or, Dream is a dumbass and ends up in hospital, but George loves him enough to withstand the painful visitor chairs to stay by his side.

Notes

hello!! this has kind been on my mind for a while so it's awesome to finally be posting.
hope you enjoy <3
(btw im aware staying 24+ hours in the ER isn't something that rlly happens but for the sake of this fic it does ok shut up)

See the end of the work for more [notes](#)

When Dream opens his eyes, all his foggy, swirling mind can register is how obnoxiously bright everything is.

He doesn't remember his house ever being that bright - no matter how high the sun is in the sky. The reason for that is of course, because the light currently blinding him isn't coming from the sun. Harsh LEDs glare down at him where they're wired in rows into the ceiling above him, and Dream has to squint and lift an arm to prevent them from searing away his sight.

After a few moments he's managed to blink away most of the flashing spots marring his vision, and relaxes a little to look down and try figure out the rest of his surroundings. For that at least the lights serve their purpose well, everything so clearly lit around him he is quickly able to figure out exactly where he is.

He's in a hospital.

White sheets that span from floor to ceiling are drawn on either side of his bed, effectively cutting him off from the rest of the bustling ER. Because now that his consciousness is solidifying, he can tell that must be where he is. The curtains don't do much sound proofing, and Dream is able to hear almost everything happening outside. The beeping sounds of EKG monitors, the groans of pain from other patients, and the voices of nurses and doctors as they talk using complicated medical terms that fly right over Dream's head.

So he knows where he is - the ER in a hospital. But why?

As if to answer him, in a sudden, nauseous wave, the pain washes over him all at once.

His head is *aching*, fiery pulses of pain throbbing through his skull with every heartbeat. Though the pain seems concentrated in his head, every part of him is sore in some way. The sting on the skin of his hands and arms, the ache in his hip, the throbbing of his ankle. His whole body feels like it was thrown out of a moving truck, which then reversed to run over him again just for good measure.

As his mind catalogues every place it hurts, he has to stifle a pained groan. It's just another sound adding to all the others echoing from outside the wall of curtains, but the staff in this hospital must have some sort of supersonic hearing, because as soon as the sound passes his lips a nurse is pulling back one of the curtains. She has a clipboard held in one hand, and a intelligent, no nonsense look about her, yet gives Dream a sympathetic smile.

"Look who's finally awake."

Dream tries to respond, but his tongue is heavy in his mouth, and his throat painfully dry. The “Yes, I am. What happened?” that he tries to say comes out as more of a “Yem, wappemned?”

The nurse just smiles, somehow understanding. She probably has to put up with this a lot, and has picked up the skill of translating “I just regained consciousness can someone please explain what the fuck is going on”.

“You had an accident trying out your friend’s skateboard and had a fall.” She begins to explain, gently but also succinct. “You’re okay, but you have a bad concussion, and your scrape left a few cuts and grazes that needed cleaning up. You also injured your ankle -a sprain- but as long as you go easy it should heal fine.”

Dream nods his head, grateful for the explanation. It’s almost as if the clarity is curbing his pain, the understanding of his situation clearing his head and causing the incessant throbbing to fade just a little. Emphasis on *a little*, though. The steady pulse of pain in his skull still makes his stomach curl with nausea.

The nurse takes a few steps closer and leans over him. “Are you still in pain?”

What is with nurses and *reading minds*?

“Yeah,” Dream croaks out, coughing lightly to clear his throat. “Just a little. My head hurts,” He raises a hand to his head and gestures in the vague area the throbbing seems to be concentrated. “I also feel sick - like I need to throw up.”

The nurses nods. “That’ll be the concussion. There’s a bag by your side if you need it.”

Dream glances to where the nurse gestures to see there is indeed a bag made of clear plastic, apparently meant to catch his vomit. He hopes he won’t have to use it, but the churn in his stomach leaves that up for debate.

“Concussions are just as unpleasant as they are rattling,” the nurse continues, “You should have heard yourself when you first came in, babbling all sorts of nonsense. Your friends were super worried.”

Dream brow furrows. “My friends?”

“Mhm, interesting lot. Kept arguing about how stupid it was to let you on the skateboard. Was obvious they were worried about you though. Both of them stayed with you the whole time, except the bigger one with the facial hair left a couple hours ago to feed... ‘Patches’ I think he said? Insisted you would be mad at him for leaving her home alone.”

Dream can’t help but smile at that. Trust Sapnap to know exactly where his priorities lie. But the nurse had said friends, plural. If Sapnap had left alone, where was..?

The nurses’ apparent ability to read minds comes in clutch once again as she smiles. With a small tip of her head she directs his gaze to Dream’s left.

“This one hasn’t left your side for one second since you were admitted.”

It’s only then that Dream finally becomes aware of the presence of someone else in his curtained off space.

There’s a chair on Dream’s left, and in the chair sits a person. They’re asleep, arms folded and chin pressed against their chest as they doze in silence. Their dark hair is disheveled and hangs messily over their eyes, the rest of their face hidden in the material of their oversized hoodie. Though not hidden enough for Dream to be unable to know exactly who it is.

Dream exhales. “*George*.”

George doesn’t stir, but even while unconscious his own name coaxes out a slight shift. A deeper exhale of air that is enough to crook his head up so Dream can better see his face.

George looks... *tired*. Though his skin has always been pale and even now is as enviably unblemished as ever, there are now dark circles beneath his eyes that Dream can’t place in his memory. His lips look chapped too, littered with sore red marks from being worried by his teeth. His hair - though messy in a way that Dream can’t deny he finds endearing - is undeniably in need of a wash. George is a mess, and Dream realises with a guilty twist in his gut that it’s because of *him*.

Dream swallows, turning back to the nurse. “He’s been here the whole time?”

“Sure has,” the nurse says, giving him a knowing smile, “when we were cleaning out your grazes he had to hold your hand to keep you from punching another nurse.”

Dream flushes, partly because of apologetic embarrassment, and partly because the thought of George holding his hand makes him stupidly flustered for some reason. “Sorry.”

“No worries, I totally understand. Antiseptic hurts like a bitch.” The nurse smiles, nodding to George once again. “You should thank him though, he obviously cares about you a ton if he’s willing to put up with that uncomfortable chair for over twenty four hours just to be with you. Seems like a good guy.”

Dream looks over at George, the light rise and fall of his chest causing Dream’s heart to squeeze. “Yeah.” He smiles softly. “He’s the best.”

The nurse nods, expression undecipherable, but a knowing glint in her eye. “I’ll top up your pain killers and then give you some more time to rest, yeah?”

Dream nods, wincing as the pain excitedly flares up after being brought back to his attention. “That would be great, thanks.”

After the nurse returns with the top up of painkillers and leaves once again, Dream relaxes into the comfortable blanket of chemical induced relief and lets his head loll to his left.

He feels a little guilty, that George has sacrificed comfort and hygiene for the sake of sitting by Dream’s unconscious, aching self. But another part of him revels in it. George is uncomfortable, unwashed, and has circles darker than Dream’s hair that time he mistook his sister’s black hair dye for the spare shampoo. By all standards, he’s a mess. But Dream thinks he’s never been happier to see his best friend.

All of a sudden, George shifts. His face twists in the folds of hoodie material, throat making an involuntary noise as he straightens, a hand coming up to rub at his eyes.

Dream smiles, warmth blooming in the pit of his chest. “Morning.”

George jumps slightly in shock, eyes widening as they look up at Dream, sitting up and staring right back. He immediately grabs his chair and scoots forward closer to Dream's bed. "You're awake."

"That I am," Dream smiles, wincing when it causes a flare of pain to flare through his skull.
"Though I feel like I was thrown out of a moving car."

George scoffs. "Close. You fell off Sapnap's skate-"

"Yeah," Dream cuts in. "The nurse told me."

"The nurse?" George frowns, "a nurse came? How long have you been awake? Why didn't you wake me?"

And maybe it's the painkillers, but like an absolute moron Dream answers honestly.

"You look pretty while you sleep."

George's skin immediately flushes a rosy pink, his hands fisting in the material of his hoodie.
"What?"

Dream turns away, mortified at the way he just spilled his guts. "Um," he coughs, rushing to change the subject and spare his dignity, "the nurse said Sapnap went back home to feed Patches. How long do you think before he's back?"

Though George definitely sees through his ruse of changing the subject, he mercifully allows it. "I don't know. He said he'd shower as well, maybe grab some food for us on the way back too."

"I wouldn't say no to something to eat that's for sure," Dream says. "Why didn't you go with him though? You could've had a shower or something."

"You saying I smell?"

“No!” Dream splutters, “no that’s not what I-” He cuts himself off as George begins to laugh. “Shut up.”

“Don’t worry, I know that’s not what you meant. Trust me though, I’m well aware that I’m a mess. Surprised the nurses haven’t kicked me out yet to be honest.”

Dream laughs. “You’re a mess? I’m the one in the hospital bed just because my stubborn ass couldn’t back down to Sapnap’s bet that I wouldn’t survive that hill.”

“Well, to be fair. You technically proved yourself.”

Dream laughs again harder this time, but suddenly his head aches with a stab of pain and he hisses, bringing a bandaged hand to his forehead. He blinks away the black spots dancing in front of his eyes as he grits his teeth through the throbbing pain.

“Dream?” A voice cuts through the haze and Dream looks up, vision clearing enough to see George’s face hovering in front of his own, eyebrows creased in worry. “Are you okay? Should I call the nurse?”

“I’m,” Dream exhales slowly, letting the pain drain from his skull as he refocuses, grounding himself in the warm brown of George’s eyes. “I’m okay.”

George seems to relax a little at that, but his shoulders remain tense with worry, the tight clench of his jaw revealing that he doesn’t completely trust Dream’s word.

“George,” Dream says, bringing his hand up to George’s cheek to lightly cup his face. Probably not the most platonic move he could go for but hey, he’s on a fuckton of pain killers that fog his brain enough to dull his usual inhibitions and common sense, so he might as well make the most of it. “I’m okay. I promise.”

George presses his lips together in a thin line, seemingly still unsure. But eventually he sighs, shoulders relaxing. He slightly tips his head, eyes sliding shut as he presses further into Dream’s palm. “Okay.”

God, George is fucking beautiful. Even as unwashed and worn out as he is now, Dream thinks he’s never seen someone as gorgeous as his best friend. His best friend who stayed by his side for over

twenty four hours just because his dumbass thought hurtling down a tarmaced hill on nothing but a strip of wood with wheels was a good idea.

Dream swipes his thumb over the smooth canvas of George's cheek, brushing past the bruised dark purple proof of George's self-sacrificial devotion. Fuck, Dream doesn't deserve him.

"Um,"

At the sound of a foreign voice, Dream and George instantly jump apart, the squeak of George's chair echoing in the silence as he pushes as far away from Dream as possible in the small curtained off space.

The same nurse from before is standing in a small section of pulled aside curtain, and gives both of them a small apologetic wave. "Sorry to... interrupt. Just thought I'd ask if those pain killers are kicking in?"

"Um, yeah." Dream coughs, lifting both hands in an awkward thumbs up, "Feeling load better, thanks."

The nurse nods her head, eyes flicking between Dream and George with a poorly hidden smile before she ducks out, closing the curtain behind her.

The silence stretches for only a few seconds before both men dissolve into laughter.

"That was so awkward," Dream wheezes, "I can't even imagine how that would've looked from her perspective."

"The look on her *face*," George giggles, raising a hand to cover his face. Dream finds his eyes drawn to him, as they always seem to be when George laughs. His mouth stretched impossible wide, nose bridge crinkling in a way that makes Dream's chest *ache*. And not just because of his earlier altercation with the concrete. He's always known that George was special to him in a way he could never put into words, but he thinks it's truly incredible that while he's laying in a hospital bed aching all over with a *concussion*, he thinks he's never felt happier.

"Thanks for staying with me, George." Dream says, chest burning with a sudden wash of emotion. "You're always sacrificing things for me, going out of your way to support me," His eyes sting

hotly and the words stick as his throat closes. “I’m - you’re - I guess what I’m trying to say is I -”

“Dream,” George cuts him off, pulling his chair impossibly closer to Dream’s bedside and reaching out to grab one of his hands. He steals Dream’s watery gaze in an instant, and smiles softly. The look in his eyes convey more meaning than words ever could, but George supplies them anyway. “I know.”

Slowly and with purpose, George laces their fingers together, disclosing the unspoken words between them with a single squeeze. Dream wants to cry. Their hands fit together like they were *made* for each other.

“What would I do without you?” He says, clinging onto George’s hand like a lifeline.

George just shakes his head. “Probably be six feet under instead of a hospital bed that’s for sure. If I hadn’t convinced you to wear a helmet you’d have a lot worse than a concussion and a few grazes.”

Dream laughs lightly. “You’re probably right about that.”

“Mhm,” George cocks his head, staring off up at the ceiling in mock thought. “Actually if you’d listened to me when I told you it was a terrible idea in the first place then we wouldn’t be here at all.”

“Okay okay, I get it.” Dream chuckles, jokingly rolling his eyes. “I’m the worst.”

George hums. “At least you’re self aware.”

Dream shakes his head, giving George’s hand a tight squeeze. “You’re such an idiot.”

George doesn’t say anything, but the squeeze he returns is all the answer Dream needs.

Later when Sapnap finally returns, they reluctantly pull apart. Though Dream mourns the loss of George’s hand in his like an amputated limb, they both have the same understanding that having to

withstand Sapnap's teasing would not be worth the comfort. But even while digging into the rapidly cooling McDonalds Sapap picked up on his way back, Dream can't help but spare George a few quiet glances. Dream doesn't miss the light dusting of pink across George's cheeks, or the way the smile lines around his eyes seem just that little bit deeper. When George inevitably catches Dream looking, he gives him a soft smile that makes Dream's heart do such a gymnastics routine he makes a silent prayer of thanks that his injuries weren't bad enough he needed to be hooked up to a heart monitor.

Later that day after a few more final check ups, Dream is allowed to be discharged and return home. When they get there, George heads for the shower, while Dream stumbles straight into his own bed, swallowing the remaining nausea and palming at his aching head.

It's even later still, when the sun is setting and Dream's bedroom is filled with the warm glow of a finishing day, that his door creaks open. He barely registers the sound of wood sliding across the carpet, but when the mattress dips beside him, his eyes flutter open.

It's George. Rays of burnt amber bleed through the blinds and kiss his freshly washed skin, glinting like fragments of gold in the strands of his damp hair. Silently, George lifts the covers, sliding in to curl himself up against Dream's side, and press his face into the crook of his neck.

Dream doesn't say anything. Instead, he pulls his hand out from where it's sandwiched underneath his pillow and snakes it downwards. When he finds George's hands under the covers, he laces their fingers together, and presses a soft kiss to his hair. He smells like vanilla and honey and *home*.

George squeezes back, and Dream finds that he doesn't really regret accepting Sapnap's challenge. He's lying in bed holding the most beautiful boy he's ever known as the sun sets on the end of their friendship, cresting the beginning of something more.

And it's worth every single ache and scar.

End Notes

:D hope u liked it!!

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